

## Message Text

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45

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /026 W

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O 131503Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3145

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LUSAKA 0897

EXDIS

FOR S/S-EX

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.) OTRA ZA

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S VISIT - LIMITATIONS ON USE OF LIVINGSTONE  
AIRPORT

REF: STATE 087631, STATE 087881, LUSAKA 0884, 0871, 0862

1. CHIEF OF PROTOCOL CONFIRMS DETERMINATION BY CIVIL  
AVIATION DIRECTORATE (CAD) THAT SECRETARY'S 707 UNACCEPTABLE  
RPT UNACCEPTABLE FOR LANDING AT LIVINGSTONE AIRPORT. CAD  
OFFICIALS REMAIN FIRM THAT 707 TAKEOFF WEIGHT OF 95,454 KILOS  
RPT KILOS IS TOO FAR IN EXCESS OF EXISTING 36,285 KILO WEIGHT  
LIMITATION ON LIVINGSTONE RUNWAY. IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT  
LARGEST AIRCRAFT TO LAND AT LIVINGSTONE TO DATE, A COMET I,  
CAUSED UNACCEPTABLE DAMAGE TO RUNWAY AT THAT TIME.

2. GRZ IS EXPLORING ALTERNATIVE AIRCRAFT POSSIBILITIES FOR  
LUSAKA - LIVINGSTONE TRIP AND CHIEF OF PROTOCOL TOLD US HE  
EXPECTS HAVE ANSWER FOR US FOLLOWING MEETING SCHEDULED  
FOR WEDNESDAY MORNING.

3. DIRECT APPROACH BY EMBASSY TO ZAMBIA AIRWAYS FOR COST DATA  
ON CHARTER OF EITHER ITS 737 OR ONE OF ITS PROPELLER-DRIVEN  
PLANES FOR TRIP TO LIVINGSTONE BROUGHT RESPONSE THAT BOTH TYPES  
ARE IN CONSTANT USE AND UNAVAILABLE FOR CHARTER. AIRWAYS  
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THEREFORE DECLINED PROVIDE CHARTER COST DATA. WE DO NOT REGARD

THIS AS FINAL ANSWER SINCE ZAMBIAN AIRWAYS COULD BE DIRECTED BY GRZ TO MAKE PLANE AVAILABLE IF SUITABLE ZAMBIAN AIR FORCE PASSENGER AIRCRAFT NOT AVAILABLE.

4. IN CALCULATING TO WHAT EXTENT WE SHOULD MAKE EFFORT TO SCHEDULE VISIT TO VICTORIA FALLS, DEPARTMENT MAY WISH CONSIDER OPINION OF EMBOFF AND OF S/S-EX ADVANCE ADMINOFF WARREN LITTRELL WHO VISITED VICTORIA FALLS ON SUNDAY, APRIL 11, AND FOUND SITUATION THERE TO BE DISAPPOINTING FROM TOURISTIC VIEWPOINT AT THIS TIME OF YEAR. BECAUSE OF UNSEASONABLY LONG RAINY SEASON, WITH STILL CONTINUING DOWNPOURS THROUGHOUT ZAMBIA, VOLUME OF WATER IN ZAMBESI RIVER AT LIVINGSTONE IS SUCH THAT OBSERVATION OF FALLS FROM GROUND IS ALMOST TOTALLY OBSCURED BY HUGE CLOUDS OF MIST (FROM WHICH FALLS DERIVE THEIR AFRICAN NAME MUSI O TUNYA MEANING "SMOKE THAT THUNDERS"). STANDARD WALK THROUGH RAIN FOREST ALONG THE "KNIFE EDGE" SUSPENSION BRIDGE OPPOSITE THE ZAMBIAN HALF OF THE FALLS DOES NOT ACHIEVE SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED VISIBILITY. CROSSING SUSPENSION BRIDGE AT THIS TIME LIKENED TO WALKING THROUGH AN AUTOMATIC CAR WASH WITH TORRENTS OF WATER COMING FROM ALL DIRECTIONS, AND EVEN RAIN GEAR WILL NOT PREVENT WALKER FROM BEING THOROUGHLY DRENCHED AND IN NEED OF CHANGE OF CLOTHING. CLOSE UP PHOTOGRAPHY WOULD BE UNFEASIBLE. SOMEWHAT BETTER IF MORE DISTANT VIEW OF FALLS THROUGH ZAMBEZI RIVER GORGE COULD BE OBTAINED FROM WALKING OUT ON VICTORIA FALLS BRIDGE BETWEEN ZAMBIA AND RHODESIA, SITE OF ABORTIVE AUGUST 1975 TALKS BETWEEN RHODESIAN NATIONALISTS AND IAN SMITH. HOWEVER, MOVEMENT ONTO BRIDGE IN FULL VIEW OF RHODESIAN BORDER GUARDS WOULD REQUIRE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION BOTH FROM POLITICAL AND FROM SECURITY STANDPOINTS.

WILKOWSKI

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**To:** STATE  
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